

course, useless for communication with Europe. On this side, are the Asiatic exports of Russia, consisting principally of furs and rude manufactures for the Southern Asiatics, who repay in silks and fine tissues.

To the East of that, Southern Russia rests upon the Black Sea. The country is like the valley of the Danube, very fertile in grain. It is of the description known here as Black Sea wheat, and is remarkably suited for the climate of Canada, which much resembles that of the countries from which we import it. Of this trade, Odessa is, or rather was, the seat.

But the great production of Russia is in its interior, that is in Russia Proper. It is capable of almost any kind of cultivation. But here is the evil. There are no rivers, but what radiate from the centre of the empire, and discharge into the Black Sea on the one side, and the Baltic on the other, both of which are closely blockaded, or into the White Sea, to the extreme North, which by this time is blockaded also. There are no common roads excepting a few military roads wide asunder. There is but one railroad, a government one, from St. Petersburg to Moscow, and that is of no use to the agriculturist. There are no canals. The country teems with grain, hemp, and flax, with pine forests which are inexhaustible, and with oxen, which, for want of a market, are boiled down whole, for the tallow, which is now principally exported to England. The lard and the tallow will bear transport, the timber and the beef will not. By a laborious land carriage, a portion of these articles was transported to the Baltic, and shipped at St. Petersburg, Revel, and Riga. The Russian government by a protective system so severe that its imports are not one third of its exports, and are less than those of Canada, has endeavoured to force internal manufactures, but in vain. No legislation will supply skill, capital and credit; no tyranny emboldens strangers to invest capital in railroads and canals.

But what we wish to call the attention of our readers to, is the means they are taking to restore the trade. This semi-barbarous people sets us an example which we might have pride in following. Their ports are blockaded. To us the sea and river navigation is open on all sides. Our road communications are bad, but those of Russia are infinitely worse, and we have an immense ad-

vantage over them in water and railroad communications. For half the year, the St. Lawrence is open to us, and during all the year we can export by the United States in bond.

The mode in which the Russians are getting over this difficulty shows some spirit. They are going to cross over by land to Dantzic in Prussia, where their produce may be shipped as neutral goods. It is stated, that large engagements have been entered into by the Prussian merchants, to act as agents or purchasers on the frontier.

The Russians have one great advantage over the Canadians in production, which we hope they will always keep. The great bulk of the people are serfs either of the crown, or of the great lords whose revenues are principally what they can make out by extorted labour, of the exportable commodities. Consequently the production is on a large scale. There is no division of labour, and the landlord is in fact the manufacturer.

But the Russians with all their efforts, have never succeeded in manufacturing any thing but very coarse articles. In any thing that is fine, and productive, they cannot compete in the least with Polish Prussia, much less with the comparatively free countries of Belgium, the North of France, with Yorkshire, Dundee, and Belfast, and other well known marts of Linen in the West of Europe.

It would be a blot on the character of civilization, to suppose that that cannot as well be done by skill, and civilization, as by force and fraud. The old mode of preparing linen fabrics, which we dare say many of our readers will recollect, was to expose the plant to what was called dew rotting on the grass, or in pits prepared for the purpose, to being partially rotted. This loosened the adhesion between the fibre, and the woody matter, and it was dressed by the hand.

After several processes, all performed by the hand, it was spun by the females of the family, who sent their hanks of yarn to be woven to the custom-weaver, who also worked it by the hand. They then sent to the country bleacher to be bleached. Until a very recent period the bleaching was performed almost entirely with wood ashes, and long exposed to the air upon grassplots. A very reasonable opinion prevailed that Chlorine, which with other Chemical re-agents which were just coming into use then, deter-

iorated the fabric. This simple mode of preparing linen fabrics prevailed for centuries, nearly over the whole of Europe. It was not considered reputable for a young woman to marry, unless she had spun, and prepared, a sufficient quantity of linen of every kind, for a future household,—the proof of her wealth in linen, was considered a very decisive one of her industry, and frugality. In law English, an unmarried woman to this day is described as a Spinster. An ancient custom, it being presumed long before the invention of elegant, and frivolous amusements, that every unmarried woman was preparing for a change in her condition.

This mode of preparing the Fabric prevailed to a considerable extent even within our own memory. It was first broken in upon, by the industrious Manufacturers of the Netherlands. Holland shirtings, and Flemish lace, were so superior in fineness, and finish, that no one who could afford it wore the native manufacture. That was the age for gentlemen distinguishing themselves, as any one may see in the portraits in the early part of the last century, and especially in the foolish, and extravagant custom of wearing ruffles. The government in vain set to work to arrest the evil, as they thought it, by high prohibitory duties. Fashion, and the Smuggler, were too strong for them. The ladies would at all cost have their lace, and the gentlemen their lawns. Not even a Bishop was fashionable without a pair of lawn sleeves from a continental loom.

With the exception of a few detached localities in Britain, and some bordering on the Baltic and the Mountains of Central Europe, where the manufacture was wholly for home consumption, Ireland appears to have been the last country which preserved the primitive mode of manufacture on a large scale; hence the very high and deserved reputation of the grass bleached Irish threads and Irish linens. The Irish of Ulster were favourably situated, from the low price of labour, their producing the raw material, and the facilities for export. We certainly do not think that any linen is equal in comfort and durability to that which is spun and woven by the hand and grass bleached.

But the great discoveries of the last half century have completely revolutionized the old processes. No person could earn any living wages by following them. The old manufacture may have been a little superior in quality, but in cheapness can bear no com-